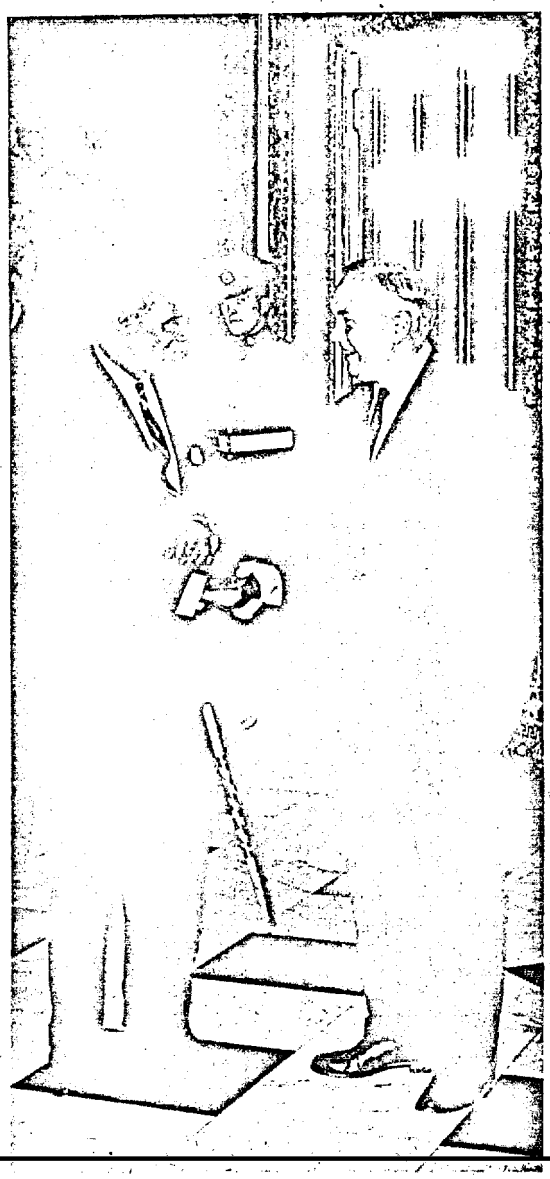
lessly tailored in a dark business suit, black, small-buckled shoes; a tie emblazoned with a tiny, crested crane, the symbolic bird of Uganda. He smoked incessantly; on occasion he would reach out from his chair to finger his quilted walking stick. Leisurely, and sometimes eloquently, he gave voice to his convictions.

The violent events of last May? "I'm ruined and heartbroken by what happened. I feel that Uganda, our precious pearl, has been soiled."

African corruption: "It stems simply from the failure of the corrupted politicians to appreciate their role in society."

The C.I.A.: "I'm not supposed to know that they're around. I'm afraid of them. Probably they spy on their own Ambassadors."

Red China: "I told Chou En-lai that if I found his men working against our Government, I would close their Embassy. I have a lot of problems here, and I would like to solve them



MAN TO MAN — Prime Minister Harold Wilson greets Obote at a London meeting of Commonwealth leaders.

of nothing except to serve the people. When my party won the general election just before independence, I was in my constituency at Lira, 120 miles from the capital. The first thing I did was to jump into a tribal dance. I had no idea at all that at that time I should be thinking about forming a Government. Then a police car came, and we thought it was to stop the dancing. An officer got out . . ."

"A Ugandan?"

"No, he was British. He saluted me and his words were: 'Sir, there is a message for you from the Governor . . .'"

DUSK began to invade the President's parliamentary office. His voice grew low, almost drowsy, but it did not seem that he wished just yet to terminate his reminiscence. We were in the middle of modern Kampala, but even in that marble building we could hear the croakings of the African twilight and the distant calling of exotic birds. The President's skin glowed like a black boot; at the nape of his neck he pulled absently—dreamily—at his long, coarse hair; he surrendered himself to a great nostalgia.

I faintly suspected that I was being treated to some sort of performance—and yet I was moved. I wondered: Is he an Ataturk, a Machiavelli or just a good actor, this goatherd in the Savile Row suit? Or perhaps all of that at once? Would he survive to consummate the building of his nation, or would he be intercepted by the ancient justice of the Kabakas?

"This ambition, this 'will to power' that you speak of, never bothered me at all," he said. "When I was a herdboy watching my flocks I thought about my brothers and sisters at school, and at times during the holidays they were very nasty. At times they even called me a great fool because I did not know how to read or write, and because I was not at school. At the same time, my uncle, the elder brother of my father, was a big chief, and my father was a subcounty chief. I knew that neither my father nor my uncle had gone to school, yet their work was to look after the affairs of men. I therefore turned my cattle, sheep and goats into human beings, and I tried—so to speak—to govern them."

"Was it then that you began to glimpse what you are today?" I asked.

"At times I tried to talk to them, and to pretend that I was myself a chief governing men," he said. "But, since they were animals, I had to care for them. In the afternoons, when I used to drive them home, I had a big problem of doing things in such a manner that some would not run too fast and leave me behind with the others. Perhaps you can see what my position was? They were animals. I needed their cooperation. . . ." ■